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A NEW SPECIES OF PIMPLINÆ.

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IN May, 1908, Mr. G. T. Lyle noticed that many aborted flower-heads of gorse near Brockenhurst, in the New Forest, contained larvæ, and from these he bred the Cecidomyiid, *Aspondylia ulicis*, Trail, together with several Chalcid parasites. During the following September the seeds of the gorse were much galled, and he collected a good many affected pods, breeding from them the same Cecidomyiid and two species of Chalcididæ. On September 20th two Ichneumonids emerged from the galled seed-pods, and some three or four hours after emergence were seen to be *in cop*. During 1909 Mr. Lyle failed in attempts to breed more of this Ichneumonid, but in the autumn of 1910 he was rewarded by the presence of five males and one female of the same species from the pods. He has been so good as to allow me to examine these, and, since they have certainly not been previously brought forward, I propose to call them

Pimpla ulicicida, sp. nov.

Head black, with only the palpi pale; mandibles slender, with teeth of equal length. Antennæ slender, filiform, and hardly longer than half body. Thorax nitidulous, and finely punctate throughout, with notauli short but deeply impressed; mesonotum entirely or broadly at sides and base, mesopleuræ and sternum more or less broadly, and metapleuræ always, with metanotum often, bright red; tegulæ and a circular callosity beneath them stramineous; metanotum longitudinally bicarinate, with no discal area, and the petiolar very short; spiracles quite circular and not very small. Scutellum and postscutellum always entirely red. Abdomen linear, strongly punctate and white-pilose, with the tubercles obsolete as in *Scambus*; entirely black above, with the segments longer than broad, and becoming quadrate at fourth in female and sixth in male; basal segment parallel-sided, of male twice and of female but very slightly longer than broad, punctate throughout, male with discally parallel carinæ extending nearly to its apex; terebra exactly as long as abdomen. Anterior legs stramineous, with only the onychii infuscate; front

femora not emarginate beneath; hind coxæ and femora fulvous, with apices of former whitish, and the trochanters subinfuscate; hind tibiæ dull white, infuscate at both base and apex, and subincrassate before the former; apical hind tarsal joint at most thrice longer than penultimate; claws of female basally lobate. Areolet small, sessile, and strongly transverse; stigma pale piceous or luteous; nervellus subgeniculate, though but obsoletely intercepted, a third below its centre. Length, 4-6 mm. ♂, ♀.

The elongate segments and rufescent thorax lend this species much the facies of *Ephialtes*, to which genus I was at first inclined to refer it; it is, however, a true *Pimpla* of the *Epiurus* group, and very distinct among our indigenous species, where it should stand between *P. pomorum*, Ratz., and *P. gallicola*, Morl. I have been at some pains to place it in the palæarctic fauna, and find its closest allies to be the black *P. vesicaria*, Ratz. (Ichn. d. Forst. i. 115), and the pale-faced *P. pictifrons*, Thoms. (Opusc. Ent. viii. 757); but it appears to most closely approach the Mallorcan *P. erythronota*, Kriech. (An. Soc. Espan. Nat. Hist. 1894, p. 248), a larger and stouter insect with the abdomen much less cylindrical.

Mr. Lyle has been so good as to present me with the type of both sexes.

Pimpla has very rarely been raised from Diptera, and I am aware of but two instances of the kind: Rondani once bred in Italy what he called *P. alternans* from *Asphondylia genistæ*, Lw., and I have quoted at some length (Ichn. Brit. iii. 88) Giraud's observations on *P. detrita*, bred from the galls of *Ochtiphila polystigma*, Mg., on *Triticum repens* in Austria.

[With reference to the two species of Chalcididæ mentioned in the foregoing note, M. l'Abbé Kieffer has most kindly identified one as *Eurytoma dentata*; the other is a species of *Pteromalus*. I have not yet been able to clear up the question as to whether they are direct parasites of the Cecidomyid, or hyperparasites through the Ichneumonid. The fact that several of the Eurytomini are known to be either partly or entirely vegetable-feeders must also be taken into consideration.

G. T. LYLE.]

A BIOLOGICAL INQUIRY INTO THE NATURE OF MELANISM IN *AMPHIDASYS BETULARIA*, LINN.

BY S. H. LEIGH.

MELANISM in British moths is a subject that has given rise to much discussion and speculation in several entomological and other journals, but notwithstanding this we really know very little of the causes which operate in the production of melanic